

With corn three times as high as it was in the markets of four years ago, the Hon. John W. Bookwalter thinks we are approaching a food crisis which may bring about in time a serious clash between the urban and agricultural population. Mr. Bookwalter has shown his faith by his action. For in the last four years he has not sold a bushel of the corn received from the farmers on his Western land and rent, and he says he will not sell a bushel this year.

"Corn is going to a dollar a bushel," Mr. Bookwalter said to me, in conversation at the Holland House, a few days ago. "The truth has not been told about the corn crop in any of the reports yet published, except the reports of the West made by a New York paper some time ago. The crop is more than 40 per cent. of the crop of last year. To-day there is not a bushel of surplus corn available in the United States. With such a short crop, corn is going a good deal higher than it is now and it is selling to-day at three times as much as it brought four years ago. To-day corn is being shipped from Chicago west instead of east, and it is naturally short. There is a shortage of oats, and the surplus of wheat is very small. I foresee an era of great prosperity for the farmer. But that means high prices for food and low prices for labor in the cities, and this condition is going to bring us face to face with the problem of the overpopulation of the great cities of the United States, due to the pauperism and homestead laws. To these laws we owe the vast lack of prosperity in the last thirty-five years. It is the effect of these laws and of the tariff which has made manufacturing prosperous and filled the cities with a population which would have remained on the farm under favorable conditions.

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

"Now I am not talking politics or the tariff," said Mr. Bookwalter. "The question is a far deeper one than the question of protection.

"Let us suppose that the conditions for agriculture all over the United States had been what they were in the East and in the Ohio valley. I was brought up on a farm